

A  
LETTER

FROM

Rachel Chandler,

TO

MINISTERS

AND

ELDERS.

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LONDON:

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LETTER

to the



MINISTERS

OF THE

SECRETARY OF STATE

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A  
**L E T T E R**  
 T O  
**MINISTERS and ELDERS.**

DEAR FRIENDS,

**A**S my Indisposition renders me incapable of attending the Quarterly - meeting in our County as in time past, and thereby am prevented being at the select Meetings for Ministers and Elders ; and finding a Concern on my Mind for the Welfare of the Ministers in particular, as that whereon the Safety of the Church in some measure depends ; and believing that my Lot will hardly fall so, as to have an Opportunity with them who are concern'd after a publick Manner, to exhort others in our Meetings any more whilst in Mutability ; I therefore take the Liberty, in the Freedom of the Gospel, to throw my Mite into the Treasury, desiring you will give what I write, a solid reading in your said Meetings, that all may be informed, who in the least degree appear in that Service, of the weighty

Concern that hath seized my Spirit on their Account, in this the Time of my Confinement at Home through bodily Weakness and Pain.

And, dear Friends, let the Fear of God have a Place in your Minds, that so you may be able to judge aright what belongs to each Particular ; for the Gospel Plow is not designed for Destruction when it is turned into the Field by the good Husbandman, who is concern'd to plow up the fallow Ground before he sows the good Seed, lest noisome Weeds should hinder its Growth, or Thorns should choak it ; and of all Parts of his Husbandry the Ministers have need to go through this Dispensation of the Plow in their own Hearts for themselves, that the Seed, the precious Seed, be not found in them among Thorns or Thistles, yea, or among any of those Things which will hurt or hinder the pure Plant from springing up and spreading itself in the Ground ; first by rooting deep in the Life of Religion, whereby they may be enabled to endure a Winter Season ; that they arise not too high before their Time ; for that some who have not known these Seasons of Probation, have soar'd aloft too soon, to their Hurt and Damage, and the Hurt and Wounding of others : Whereas if the LORD hath designed us for this great and weighty Work, he will certainly prove us, whether we are Vessels fit to contain holy Oil until the Day that he calls for it ; and then whether, as obedient Servants, we are ready to  
yield



yield ourselves to his Will in what we do ; for if he on proving us, find we are leaky, it is no wonder if he sets us aside, or sinks us again in *Jordan*, until we become fit for Use ; and well will it be for all that submit to the Hand of POWER, thus to qualify them, that they may know when to speak, and how ; faithfully serving their MASTER according to the present Knowledge received ; and not go before their GUIDE by speaking too much, too often, too soon, or even sometimes at all ; and on the other hand, carefully observing not to quench the SPIRIT in its Motions or Leadings, by withholding Good from them to whom it is due, be it little or much ; for there is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to Poverty.

And altho' some that are rightly anointed and fitted for the Service of the Ministry, have at some Seasons exceeded the Limits of their Gifts, through a warm Zeal for God's Cause, the Peoples Good, or through a sort of Emulation to appear something to their Brethren ; whereas they should have been content to have appear'd rather as Fools for his Sake who made himself of no Reputation : Yet these, as they grieve the Seed in others, so they are grieved themselves when they look at what they have done, and are forced, yea they submit to take Shame upon them, and lay down in Sorrow, until their Foolishness is done away  
by

by Repentance, and they thereby made wiser, who now are afraid to move at all lest they should err again ; and here it may be they have, and do sometimes quench the Spirit in themselves and others ; and when this is the Case, the Advice of an Elder, one who is a Father, that can pity and sympathize with the weak Child, as well as correct it, may be necessary, in order to keep the Staggerer from falling, for there is a great Difference between those who run, and the LORD hath not sent them, and they who only make some false Steps to their own and the Meeting's present Disadvantage.

Wherefore, dear Brethren and Elders, Fathers in the Church, if there be any among you who can feel the Children's Wants, look about you, and see if there be not some who want a Garment cast over them, or a swadling Band to bind up the Loins of their Minds, that they may be strengthen'd to watch more closely for the future over their own Willings and Runnings, and so may be helped to go more soberly on their Way ; and look a little to the State of the Children, and your fellow Servants ; and guard against your own Spirits in what you do, that what you say to them may favour of Life, that it may reach the Witness ; and do not be hasty in Reproof or Correction ; neither soothe any in a wrong Case through personal Affection, but sink down in yourselves to your GUIDE, who will not suffer you to take  
Bribes

Bribes against, or for any, to the blinding your Judgment ; so shall you be helpful to the Lambs and Sheep of our MASTER'S Fold, guarding not only against Wolves, but against that Nature which is pushing with Shoulder and Horn, to the beating down the Feeble among the Flock.

And Oh ! you dear and tender among the Lambs, take you Care, be sure to watch for your CAPTAIN, and mind his Leadings, take good Heed to his Counsel, follow his Direction in yourselves, and slight not the Advice of your Brethren, lest you become polluted, and unfit to be retained in the Ministerial Office you have been entrusted with : For from henceforth, saith the LORD, as well as in old Time, *I will be sanctified in all them that draw nigh me, to offer spiritual Gifts on mine Altar, and do minister about holy Things ;* for it is the Sons and Daughters of *Levi* that must be tried, that they may become as fine Gold.

And, dear Elders, I humbly entreat you, with the Ministers, that you watch against the Seeds of Division and Discord among yourselves ; for if any thing of this Nature appear among you, it will marr the Work, and overturn your Devices, so that others will be leaven'd into the same Likeness, and one will say, *I am for Paul*, and another, *I am for Apollos* ; and the precious Gift in themselves will be neglected and overlooked, and then the Seed  
which

which the good Husbandman hath sown, will be buried by such carnal Proceedings and Behaviour. Wherefore bear and suffer, I entreat you, with me, as it may probably be my last to you, when I say in the Language of holy Writ, *Have Salt in yourselves, and be at Peace one with another*, so shall the Savour of Life go forth from you, and you shall become helpful to season others; then shall you rejoice in the LORD your God, and he will rejoice over you, and do you Good, and make you a Blessing in his House, where ye shall be as Pillars that shall no more go out: The LORD himself settle, strengthen and establish you in every good Word and Work, to the Praise of his own Name, to your Comfort, and the Good of others, is the secret Breathing of one of the least among you, who am your Friend and fellow Labourer with the travailing Seed for the Redemption thereof.

*Essex*, the Ninth  
Month 1764.

R. CHANDLER.

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